

# THE LEISURE HOUR.

BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,  
AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND.—*Cowper.*



TRouble AT FARMER BROWNLOW'S HOME

## NINE-TENTHS OF THE LAW.

CHAPTER XIII.—AFTER DINNER.

Still in thy right hand carry gentle Peace,  
To silence envious tongues.

—*Shakespeare.*

**T**HERE was a great deal of loud talking among the tenants at the rent-day dinner after Mr. Neville's departure, and, notwithstanding that the wine circulated freely, the conversation was not com-

plimentary to their host. Every one began to talk to his neighbour, at his elbow or across the table, of the interview which each had had in turn with "the new man" in the library. It was not as it used to be, they all agreed. They might as well not have gone in to see him at all. One had petitioned for a reduction in his half-year's rent on account of the floods, which had washed away the greater part of his hay-crop, and silted up the rest so that no horse or cow could eat it, and had been

civilly but decidedly refused, with a hint, moreover, that, if the season had been less unfavourable, Mr. Chamberlain would have raised the rent, and that the tenants must be prepared for such a measure next year. Another had asked for certain improvements in drainage or farm-buildings, and had met with a similar rebuff, Mr. Chamberlain having given it as his opinion, so the squire said, that such things were uncalled for and unreasonable; tenants should make the best of what they had, instead of wanting more. In every instance Chamberlain was the obstacle—or, more properly speaking, the blame was thrown upon him.

"I would not put up with it if I were Chamberlain," said one. "Chamberlain can't do anything without the squire, and the squire won't do anything without Chamberlain."

"It answers Chamberlain's purpose, though," another answered, "and he doesn't care what anybody says. It's his interest to please the squire, and the squire pleases himself; and between them both the tenants come off badly."

"A steward has duties to fulfil towards the tenants as well as towards the squire," said a third, "and he has another Master to please, if he would think of it. He ought to be able to answer with a clear conscience before both."

Thus the squire and his steward were talked over without any reserve by the assembled farmers, and John Brownlow was appealed to more than once, as a sort of leading man among them, for his opinion.

"Well," he said, at length, addressing himself to two or three who sat nearest to him at the upper end of the table, "if I must speak—"

"Hear, hear!" cried several of them at once, and the immediate effect was that other voices were hushed, and Mr. Brownlow found himself addressing the whole assembly, who, very much to his embarrassment, prepared themselves to listen to him. He was surprised at the interest which they all seemed to feel in himself and his opinions, observing how they nudged one another, and how intently every face was turned towards him as soon as he began to speak. His voice was husky and tremulous, and some one whispered to him to "stand up," that he might be better heard. But he would not do that; he had only intended to answer the complaints of two or three on either side of him, and shrank from making anything like a speech, especially on the subject which seemed to be uppermost in all their minds.

"I was only going to observe," he said, "just in the way of conversation, that I have no fault to find with Mr. Chamberlain, and that if I had I should go and tell him so, as quietly as I could, between him and me. I should not talk about it at such a time as this, nor before so much company. No doubt a man in his position has a great many difficulties to contend with, and can't always do as he would. I dare say he understands his duty, which, as I take it, is to look after his master's interests, and to see justice done between landlord and tenant. He is steward for both, and what is best for the one is likely to turn out best for both in the long run. I know there are some here who think they don't have fair play; they have said so again and again, and have repeated it aloud at this table. I hope it may prove that they are mistaken; but if they really have any ground for complaint, let them go and speak it plainly to the steward, and argue the point with him

if need be, and see if they cannot get redress. If he has done wrong, give him an opportunity to set it right."

He hesitated, observing that his remarks did not meet with the sympathy or concurrence of his listeners.

"Have you had any talk with Mr. Chamberlain yourself?" one of his neighbours asked. "Is there any truth in what we have heard about him and you?"

"I don't know what you are referring to," Mr. Brownlow answered. "I have had no particular communication from him."

"Maybe it's not true, then?"

"What is not true?"

There was silence for some moments, which every one seemed reluctant to break. Some one at length whispered into Michael's ear, who, turning in a hurried way to his father, said, in a low tone:

"They say it is all settled that Chamberlain is to have your house and farm, father, and that we are to take Windy Gorse or Rushy Pastures."

"Where did they hear it?" Mr. Brownlow asked.

Half a dozen voices were ready now to confirm the rumour, though no one seemed to be able to give authority for it, or to trace it to its source.

Mr. Brownlow pushed away his chair and moved towards the door.

"Where are you going, father? What do you intend to do?" Michael asked.

"Stay you here," he replied. "I am going to do as I said I would, in such a case as this. I am going to see Mr. Chamberlain, face to face, and ask him whether there be any truth in this report, and if there be, to—tell him what I think about it."

"Let me go with you," said Michael; "it's my business almost as much as yours. I'll give him my mind about it, too, and maybe something more."

Many others of the company had risen to their feet by this time, and made as if they would have accompanied John Brownlow to witness his interview with the steward, but he held up his hand to them and said, quietly:

"No, gentlemen. No, Michael! Between him and me—between him and me! Until he tells me with his own lips that it is as you have said I shall not believe a word of it. Between him and me, him and me!"

He left the room, and the company waited in silence, or conversing together only in low tones, till he should return. He was absent a long while, but appeared at length, and Mr. Chamberlain with him.

John Brownlow looked pale as he moved towards his place at the table, but Chamberlain was flushed and agitated. The former resumed his seat, but, observing that all eyes were fixed upon him, rose after a few seconds and said:

"Gentlemen, I have done as I said I would, and as I recommended you to do. What has passed between Mr. Chamberlain and myself need not be told to any one. I don't know that I have anything to complain of, and if I had this would not be the proper time or occasion for complaint. I don't think Mr. Chamberlain wishes to do me such an injury as you imagine. I shall not believe it until he tells me so in so many words. If it should turn out that the reports you have heard are true—"

Michael snorted loudly; his eyes were fixed in an angry and threatening manner upon Mr. Chamberlain. His lips were parted and his teeth set.

"If it should turn out that there is truth in what you have told me," Mr. Brownlow continued, "then, whether it be the squire who is to blame, or Mr. Chamberlain, or both, I hope I shall act the part of a Christian, and forgive the wrong-doer. I hope I shall be able to shake hands with him as I do now."

He held out his hand, as he spoke, to the steward, who took it, and held it for a moment within his own, but without raising his eyes. Then Mr. Brownlow wished the company good morning, and, without saying another word, quitted the room.

## CHAPTER XIV.—RUMOURS.

Say from whence  
You owe this strange intelligence.  
—Shakespeare.

ALTHOUGH Mr. Brownlow drove home, with Michael by his side, and the latter was full of curiosity, and asked him many questions, he spoke but little, and seemed to be absorbed with his own thoughts. It was evident that his interview with the steward had not been a pleasant one; but he refused to take even his son into his confidence.

"Tell me, at least," the latter urged, "whether there is anything in the report that Chamberlain means to turn us out of the Goshen?"

"I will tell you next quarter-day, Michael. Mr. Chamberlain has not given me notice to quit yet. When he does it will be soon enough to answer your question. In the meantime, I shall not speak of what passed between us to any man."

"Did he ask you to keep it secret, then?"

"No, but I told him I would do so of my own accord. For his sake, as well as for my own, I prefer to hold my tongue."

"Will he tell no one?"

"He will do as he thinks proper; I have nothing to do with that. He made me no promise, and I made him none."

"It is a strange piece of business. I can judge pretty well what it all amounts to from the way it has affected you. I never saw you so put about before."

"It was not that, Michael; not that only."

Michael did not venture to ask any more questions, rightly divining that his own conversation with Mr. Neville in the library had been the chief cause of his father's annoyance in the first instance. He would have liked to justify himself, as he thought he could do, if he were allowed to argue the whole question, but he felt that the opportunity was not convenient. So he held his peace, and the rest of the journey was performed in silence.

But although John Brownlow had said that he would not tell his story to any man till next quarter-day, he had used the word "man" advisedly, and did not intend to conceal anything that had passed from his wife, from whom he never had any secrets; and in this way it may come at once to the knowledge of our readers.

Mrs. Brownlow had been waiting her husband's return with no little anxiety; and as evening drew on she went often to the door to look along the road in expectation of his coming. It grew dark before he arrived, and the sound of the gate swinging in the distance was the first intimation she received of his approach. She went at once to greet him, and, scanning his features with eyes full of affectionate care, saw at once that something was wrong. She

took him by the hand and led him towards the parlour.

"Why, John dear," she exclaimed, "how cold you are! And you are all of a tremble. Come in and sit you down before the fire."

"It is cold," her husband answered, pressing his teeth together to keep them from chattering; though he had scarcely felt the chilliness of the air until that moment.

Mrs. Brownlow got him some tea as quickly as she could, and sat by him till he had drunk it. Then, clasping his hand in hers, and looking up into his face, she asked him almost in a whisper what had happened.

Mr. Brownlow told her first about his interview with Mr. Neville, but said very little of the part which Michael had played on that occasion.

"He talked of changes, Mr. Neville did," the old man said, "and he made me feel very uncomfortable; but when I would have brought him to the point, he put me off, and said I must see Chamberlain. Then came the dinner, and after dinner, when Mr. Neville had left the room and Chamberlain was gone with him, some of the neighbours began to talk, and they said things which roused my suspicions worse than before, and made me resolve to have it out with the steward there and then. So I got up and left the room. The—the new man—had started then for London, going abroad, I believe, where he came from, and Chamberlain (the other new man) was in the steward's room putting some papers together before coming back to the company. So I stepped in and shut the door after me."

"Yes, John?" Mrs. Brownlow said, inquiringly, seeing that her husband halted in his narrative.

"Yes, John?"

"Mr. Chamberlain," I said, going up to the other side of the desk where he was standing, and looking at him across it, face to face, as near almost as mine is to yours—"

"Not quite, though," Mrs. Brownlow interrupted, with a smile, and something else.

"No," he replied, "not quite; a kiss for a blow, that would have been; but we haven't got to that yet."

"Mr. Chamberlain," I said, 'is it true that you want to turn me out of my farm, and to take my house for yourself?'

"He was writing, or pretending to write—scribbling something on the blotting-paper. He did not venture to look up; but as I waited quietly and sternly for an answer, he said presently:

"There is nothing settled, and it's not my doing, Mr. Brownlow. It's the squire."

"Mr. Neville says he doesn't interfere in these matters," I replied; "but—nothing settled! What do you mean? Is it not settled that I am to continue in the house and home where I was born and my father before me? What is there to unsettle it?"

"Mr. Neville-Thornton" (that's the name he has taken now)—"Mr. Neville-Thornton wants me to live nearer the Hall," he said.

"Let him build you a house, then."

"He won't do that."

"Then stay where you are."

"The house is not good enough—at least, Mrs. Chamberlain don't like it. But it's no use talking about it at present. It will perhaps come to nothing. As I said before, nothing is settled."

"No, Mr. Chamberlain," I answered; "it's no



use talking about it—for this reason, that I have not had notice to quit yet, and you cannot give me notice till next quarter-day; and after that I can stay another six months. I don't believe that either you or your master will make up your minds, when it comes to the point, to do me such an injury. I shall go on as if nothing had been said.'

"Well," he answered, 'it might be as well to be prepared in your own mind, you know. Of course we shall give you another holding.'

"There's none vacant," I said.

"There's Windy Gorse," says he.

"The house that your wife won't live in; to say nothing of the land, which is enough to break any one's heart," I answered.

"And there's Rushy Pastures," he said again.

"Worse than Windy Gorse!" I exclaimed.

"I can't help it. There's no pleasing you. You might hold the two together at a moderate rent. Your son would like to have them, as I understood; and they would do capitally for him to try experiments upon."

"So then," I said, 'you propose to turn me, an old man, out of my house—the house that I have repaired and improved—and to give me instead one that you and your wife can't live in!'

"The squire—" he began.

"Don't talk about the squire!" I cried, losing my temper. 'The squire is dead and buried; and this man who has just run away from us, taking our money with him, leaves you to do as you like. Speak for yourself, not for him; and tell me whether you mean to take my house or not.'

"He would not answer me; and I went on. 'Mr. Chamberlain,' I said, 'did you ever hear the story of King Ahab and the vineyard of Naboth? Ahab coveted Naboth's vineyard, because it was near unto his own house, and he offered him a better vineyard for it—not a worse. You, or Mr. Neville, covet my farm; and you offer me Windy Gorse and Rushy Pastures for it. I'll answer you as Naboth did: 'The Lord forbid it me that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.' You may turn me out of it, but I'll not give it up till I'm obliged.'

"It's Mr. Neville-Thornton's property," said Chamberlain, in an angry tone: 'you'll admit that, I suppose?'

"I'll admit nothing," I said. 'He has not proved his right to it yet.'

"He has possession," said the steward; 'that is nine-tenths of the law. Let them take it from him if they can. And as for Naboth, this is a different case—the squire can do what he likes with his own. There's no one else's property to seize, and no Naboth to be killed before taking possession.'

"I did not answer him, mother, but there was something at my heart which seemed to say that such an act as he was thinking of might go far to shorten my days, and yours, too, perhaps, if it ever came to pass. We have had a very happy, quiet life here; we have brought up our children in this house. We have had joys, and sorrows, too, under this roof; it seems to be, somehow, a sacred place to me when I think of all that has happened here. I don't know how I could tear myself away from it and settle anywhere else. It would not be very long, perhaps, before the best of the story would be told—'Naboth is dead!'

For some moments neither of them could speak. Yes, they had had their share of sorrow in that

house, and the memory of it clung to them. They had lost two children, one after another, with only a short interval. They had nursed them through days and nights of alternate hope and fear; they had hung over their dying beds, and had seen the little coffins carried from their door to the churchyard; they had followed them to the grave, and, worst of all, had returned to the lonely house, where their voices and their footsteps should no more be heard.

They could look back upon those days now without much pain, remembering how they had been supported under their trials, but they could not bear to think of leaving the house in which they had seen and suffered such things. There were shadows upon that hearth, as well as rays of comfort and warmth, and they felt themselves drawn to the familiar spot almost as much by the cares which they had helped each other to bear as by the pleasures they had shared. It was a sacred place to them both, as John Brownlow had truly said.

"It won't come to that, I hope," Mrs. Brownlow said, trying to comfort her husband, in spite of her own distress. "I am glad you said you wouldn't give it up. They will think twice before they try to turn us out. It would be a scandal all through the place."

"I must have another talk with Mr. Fellowes," Brownlow remarked, after a long silence. "I must find out whether anything fresh has come to light about that will. It would cost a great deal of money, I suppose, to go to law about it; but if the new man is to go on like this, it may be worth thinking of, if it's only to frighten him a bit and to protect other folks."

Mrs. Brownlow did not encourage that idea. It must be left to Mr. Arthur, of course, she said. No one else had any right to interfere.

"Mr. Arthur has no money," Brownlow answered. "None that he could spare, at all events. I have a trifle laid by, as you know. I might perhaps help him."

"You might help him to get his own, John, if that is what you mean; but it would not be right to get him into a lawsuit only to save ourselves from being turned out of the Goshen."

"Right, mother! It should be for his sake, as you say, not for ours; and I doubt whether it would do him any good in the end."

"What did Michael say to it?" Mrs. Brownlow asked, presently; "about the land, I mean?"

"I did not tell him all that had passed," said her husband. "I dared not. He is so hasty and so independent."

"But you must tell him?"

"Not at present. The last word I said to Mr. Chamberlain was that I should not believe he had made up his mind to turn me out of my house and farm and take them for his own until he should serve me with the six months' notice; till then, I said, I should go on as usual. I should look upon it as if nothing of the kind had ever been said or thought of. He should not have the credit of such an act until he had fairly earned it, and if in the meantime he should abandon his purpose no one should know from me that he had ever entertained it; and so the matter stands. But I think I will go and see Mr. Fellowes, and ask if anything fresh has turned up about the will. He won't charge me anything, I dare say, and if he does I can pay it. Six-and-eightpence won't hurt me."

They were interrupted by their daughter Lizzie, who threw the door open with an impetuosity very unusual on her part, and came running towards her father.

"Is it true?" she cried. "It can't be true? Is it, father? is it true?"

"Is what true, Lizzie?"

"About leaving the Goshen and going to live at Windy Gorse?"

"Who told you?"

"Everybody is talking of it."

Looking towards the door, John Brownlow saw a group of servants and others in the entry, all waiting with open eyes and anxious faces to hear his answer. Beyond them in the doorway was to be seen the long, thin, wrinkled face of the poor half-witted man, Billy Fidd. His pale blue, washed-out looking eyes shone with unwonted lustre under the influence of excitement, which, however, seemed to be of a pleasurable kind, as far as he was concerned.

Billy, it must be told, though of weak intellect, took a lively interest in everything that passed in Dulborough and its neighbourhood, and carried news, and gossip too, from one house to another. He had his favourites and his foes, or thought he had. He did not like new people; especially he did not like Mr. Neville, for he had stood before his window for an hour on Sunday morning, waiting for sixpence, which the old squire had given him without fail for many years past on that day, and he had taken no notice of him. Billy "had a good mind" never to go there again. He always spoke of his "good mind" when he had quite decided to do or not to do anything. For a similar reason he did not like the Chamberlains. Billy was a privileged visitor at all the neighbouring houses, once a week, but not oftener; he never came inside, but stood close to the windows until some one took notice of him, giving him tobacco, or bread and cheese, or perhaps a few halfpence. He had met with an unexpected rebuff at Windy Gorse, for Miss Spilby drawing up the

blind one morning, a day or two after her arrival, with "bats and owls" still upon her brain, had discovered poor Billy's grotesque white face, with an amiable smile upon it, flattened against the glass within an inch of her own. She had given vent to her feelings in a loud scream, which so disconcerted the other silly person that he had gone away in a great hurry, with "a good mind" never to present himself at that house again; and since that day he had "set his face" against the Chamberlains (in a figurative sense) instead of against their windows. He told every one they were queer people, wrong in their heads, tapping his forehead as he spoke; and "he had a good mind" to have no dealings with them.

Billy had been at the Hall that day to pick up what he could from the tenants; and he had heard that the Chamberlains were going to leave Windy Gorse, and that Mr. Brownlow was to live there. That was enough for the poor half-witted fellow, who could never take in more than one side of a question at a time; and he had come with glee to tell the news at the Goshen, and to offer his congratulations to the household. Michael, who had returned with his father, was questioned, but gave uncertain replies; and Lizzie, unable any longer to restrain her anxiety, now appealed to her father.

"Everybody says so; but it's not true, is it?" she exclaimed once more.

"What am I to say, mother?" John Brownlow asked, turning to his wife. "It's the talk of the place."

"Tell them what you told the tenants; tell them nothing has been done as yet, and they are not to believe it till they see it. 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.'"

"Yes," cried the old man, turning to his daughter and embracing her. "Yes, that shall be my text; I won't anticipate evils. I have had no notice to quit yet, and I won't expect one. Give no heed to anything you hear about it. 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.'"

## HIGH LIFE IN OLD IRELAND.

II.

THE next letter of the young Irish bride gives a good idea of what Pennant had not time to describe—life in a country house of the best class in the south of Ireland between 1745 and 1790, its guests and neighbours.

The bride's dislike of the ultra-finery of the provincial ladies recalls a story told of a relative of hers, no less a personage than Prior's Kitty, the beautiful and eccentric Duchess of Queensberry, who, when she was visited by some fine provincials of the same stamp, maliciously insisted on taking them for a walk in her park in Drumlanrig, ostensibly to show them its beauties, but really in order to make them drag their costly brocades and laces through wet grass and mud, from which her grace was effectually protected by a simple comfortable style of dress and stout-soled boots. Duchess Kitty's Irish cousin, "young and gay" as herself, would have dearly enjoyed playing the like prank with the ladies of the following letter, and so revenging the wrongs of the poor overworked waiting-maid. The description of the bishop and his train attendant of eccle-

siastical courtiers might have been penned by the witty and wayward duchess, and the hereditary characteristics of both cousins crop out abundantly in the letters.

July 28th, 1746.

My Dear Sister,—I must say I think you were very good to write so soon to me. I assure you I did not expect it; I don't say this in the mock-modest way Lady — did, for I am not a person of that consequence, but seriously I think I left you with enough of business on your hands, taking care of poor D., who, I am glad to hear, is now in a fair way, and that, added to the natural laziness of our family, was sufficient to have made you silent. Now I must tell you that I should have written a second letter to you before, if it had not been for an old nasty, grunting bishop who has been staying with us for a whole fortnight, and who plagues me out of my life, he is such a formal piece. One would think a man could be no trouble to us, but he is as bad to me as ever old Mrs. — is to you, for

he is so feeble that he can't walk abroad with the men, and so he is left on our hands the whole day long, and a heavy load he is, I assure you. I believe I shall never endure the sight of a black gown again, for there is such a regiment of 'em every day dancing attendance on him, that it quite kills me. This day he has gone with the rest to dine at —, so I have luckily a quiet minute to discourse with you a bit.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now as to visitors in the day. We have had a good many. First Colonel P— and his wife and her sister, both daughters of Colonel H. They came here about a fortnight after we came home, dressed out in a most surprising manner in single lappets and Castle gowns. You must know I took a great spite against them for a story I heard that they sent six miles for a maid to dress them the day they called here. This I heard before they came, and it gave me a strong prejudice against 'em. Were it not for that, I don't know but I would have liked 'em well enough, though they seemed a little starched and conceited. I was in great fear of their lying here, for they generally do so, it seems; but they did not this time, by good luck. This was a great relief to me, I can assure you, but they are to come here soon again to stay a week when the coast is clear, for at present 'tis a flood, and locusts cover the land. There was a Mrs. F. C. who dined here twice lately, whom I began to like wonderfully; she is pretty, and a well-bred kind of woman, but that she happened to say to some one that some lady had a black "snag" saccue on. Now that is a word entirely of their own coining. I was expecting to hear her say "lob" at dinner (for lobster), but there happened to be none, or I am sure she would have said it. As for "chicks" and "chokes," I am quite used to them, and I don't doubt when I see you again I shall be quite master of a new language. But, indeed, in spite of all this, they are a very civil give-and-take sort of people here. Colonel H.'s son's wife was another that I liked very much; she was once very handsome, but is much decayed at present. . . . If fame speaks true, my brother D. had some small share in her good graces about six years ago at Bath. She did not forget, like Mrs. B., to ask very kindly after him, and hoped she should see him here, for, she added, it would give her great pleasure to see him anywhere, at which I had like to have crowed in her face, for I had been let into that secret before. I hope we shall see her often, for she is really a very sensible, entertaining woman. There is also a very good kind of family living in the town near us, of whom I believe I gave you an account before—Parson S.'s; he is a very sweet man; I could find it in my heart to be in love with him. He has a wife and a sister, and very good folk they are too. As they are so near we see them almost every day. We have been jaunting about this week past, dining abroad on the strand, which is really very pleasant. We dined in the deer park this day sennight on the top of a hill, surrounded with trees. It is really a most delightful place, for from it one has a full prospect of the sea and the whole country for many miles round. Next Thursday the bishop and his gang decamp, and on Fryday we go to D—, which is four-and-twenty miles from this. There are to be races there, and a deal of fine jovial doings—dancing, and boating, and what not; they are to last a week. This family goes there to humour my ladyship,

but the family at L— does not; they would not condescend so far as to partake of any country diversion. But I had near forgotten to tell you how I was dressed out last Sunday sennight in my yellow and silver in honour of my lord bishop, to go to church, and really I disliked it much; but it was Lady Anne's desire, so you may be sure I did it. That and Lord —'s wedding-day was the only time I had a hoop on since I arrived in the country, but I intend when I return the Miss H.'s visit to send an express to you for my trimming. . . . And now, my dear, I have told you all that is worth telling from this part of the world. If you can read it, well for you. I confess 'tis somewhat akin to the letter you showed me in Dublin; but as we value everything more that is hard to come at, so I am in hopes you will this, as it is nearly illegible; but be assured it comes from one who is with great truth very affectionately yours, \* \* \*

P.S.—My love to your Sweet William; mine is not very well, he has a sore throat. Remember me to Miss —, and tell her when I go to D— I will be sure to inquire for the MacGillicuddy and the MacCarthy Mor (the great MacCarthy).

The two latter Milesian names are, of course, only mentioned because they tickled her saucy young ladyship's fancy as being "comical" and "barbarous" illustrations of the wild west. The two gentlemen bearing those old Celtic titles about whom she promises to inquire, as a traveller in Africa might inquire for some extraordinary aboriginal "specimen," were, like their kinsman the O'Donoghue, living in the obscurity and poverty which was the common lot of all Irish Roman Catholics of that day, although the MacCarthy Mor\* was the owner of a considerable estate around Killarney, including the beautiful demesne of Mucruss, only, however, through the forbearance and connivance of his Protestant neighbours.

D—, where the races described in the next letter came off, was and is an insignificant little seaport town of the wild west, but until 1800 it returned two members to the Irish Parliament. That a band should have been brought all the way from Dublin to enliven it with music during the races is a curious proof of the extravagance of the Irish provincial gentry in old times. The place lay in a very beautiful but very poor mountainous district, where there were but two resident landed proprietors of any note, whose united revenues could not have exceeded six or seven thousand a year. In the present age of cheap travel, their descendants, whose moneys have quadrupled, would not think of incurring the expense of bringing down musicians to the D— races. The picture of the elderly portion of the company, who disliked boating, staying within doors all the beautiful long August days playing cards, regardless of the lovely country outside, full of interest to the historian and antiquarian, as well as to the artist, gives us another characteristic glimpse of fashionable life in old Ireland. The Mrs. Hamilton, to whose style of entertainments in Fishamble Street, Dublin, the D— ball is compared, was an Irish Mrs. Cornelys, who gave ridottos at a music-hall, to which a gentle-

\* He married the daughter of Edward Herbert, Esq., M.P., and left an only child, Charles MacCarthy Mor, an officer in the Guards, who died unmarried at an early age in 1770, bequeathing Mucruss to his maternal grandfather.



man with two ladies was admitted by a three-guinea ticket, three guineas representing about seven or eight of our money at present.

August 30th, 1746.

My Dear Sister,—It was not the form or ceremony of the thing that kept me from writing to you all this while, but the constant hurry I have lived in ever since I writt last, which was just as we were taking flight to D—. We spent a week there very pleasantly. Three families of us lay at Counsellor G.'s, the P.'s and H.'s and our own, besides a few straggling men. We dined each day in a tent that was pitched on a hill over the sea, every creature in the town assembled there by beat of drum at four shillings a head the gentlemen, and two shillings the ladies. I believe there was, one day with another, about fifty of us dining together in the *pavilion*, for we scorned to give it so vulgar a name as a tent! It was built in the form of an octagon, tables all round, and the waiters in the middle. So much for the dinner. Our diversions were boating, racing, and dancing. Every morning after breakfast, except the days of the races, the young folk of us went boating in the bay. The old folk stayed at home and played cards. There were no stout sailors amongst us but Mrs. P. and I, all the rest were dying; and, indeed, the last day we were out it was so rough I was sick myself. We generally stayed out till the hour for dinner, and after it sat about an hour with the men, and then went to dress for the ball at night. We all went to the tent slammakins without our hoops, or we should not have had room to stir, but we made up for that at night by dressing in a most surprising manner. My dress the first night was no other than my white and silver, the collours (*sic*) you are so fond of, and without doubt I made a tearing figure in it. I wanted nothing but a head to make me a complete Castle lady, but that I really could not afford the trouble of, though the rest did—nay, one lady had two lace heads, and that was really too little. She thought she ought to have one for every night in the week. Neither of the countesses was there, so I had to lead up the ball with the lord of the manor at present, but the town really belongs to his little nephew, who is at school. I was quite sick of all my finery that night; it was so hot that I was not able to dance much, for which reason I did not put it on again, but made a lutestring nightgown serve, which was much more comfortable to dance in. We danced until about eleven, and then the three families went home to Counsellor G.'s to supper, and about two we retired to bed, and this was exactly the life we led. At the races I had the terrible mortification of seeing a horse of Willy's famously beat, and not only that, but distanced in the very first heat. If it had not been for that I should have liked the diversion well enough. There were five horses started, and all ran pretty equal except my squire's. The horses of Dick F., brother to —, won it, and all the ladies decked it with ribbons, and I was obliged to give a ribbon too, which was vastly provoking. I must not forget to tell you that we had a band of musick from Dublin attending us constantly, and if the room we danced in had been a little larger, it would have been Mrs. Hamilton's over again to perfection, for the prices were the same, and tea and coffee for the ladies and negus for the gentlemen, just as in Fishamble Street, paying extraordinarily for it. I never missed one night's dancing while I was there from Saturday until Saturday.

After we returned here the family at L— came and stayed a week, and after they were gone the M.'s succeeded, and are here at present, and by much ado I got a spare hour from them to give you this account of myself. They go off next Tuesday, and then we return the visit to L—, and I believe we shall stay there a fortnight, as we have not been there since we came to the country except for a morning visit. Sweet William desires his love to you both. He is a little how-howish to-day, occasioned by a merry-making on the strand yesterday; and between you and I, I am not charmed with those men's parties abroad, for they seldom end until every man is completely drunk! But such things must be at this time to please the higher powers. I shall be a grass widow the week after next, for he goes to — on business. The postboy waits for this, so I must bid you adieu, and assure you I am most sincerely your affectionate sister, \* \* \*

The lady with the "two heads" sounds puzzling to the uninitiated in the fashions of the first half of the eighteenth century. Head was the name for the lace coiffures which crowned the piles of hair on the real heads of the belles of the period. A lace head was often an immensely expensive affair. The lutestring nightgown was not what we should now understand by the latter word, but a simple robe, with a loosely fitting bodice and demi-trained skirt, worn without the fashionable and cumbrous hoop. The bride in her simple lutestring amongst the hoops and heads of the fine ladies of D— must have looked as wilful and as pretty as her cousin, Duchess Kitty, when she refused to appear at St. James's in the style of dress which the Lord Chamberlain prescribed and banished her for not wearing.

Nearly a century and a half have passed away since these letters were written, and notwithstanding the political changes that have taken place within that time, the changes in Irish social life—or at least in the principles underlying it—are more apparent than real. Irish hospitality is less profuse and more refined than of old, and amongst the higher class intemperance has diminished; but the same love of pleasure and show, and the same disregard of the duties of "property," the rights of which are so tenaciously maintained, prevails amongst that class; and the same amount of misery prevails amongst the dwellers in innumerable mud-built hovels, the counterpart of those which shocked good John Wesley. Centuries of misrule from without and from within have produced a state of things which it will take perhaps centuries to set right. Yet in the very discontent of the Irish peasantry with their present position (expressed with the exaggeration and violence of ignorant and impulsive men) there is an element of hope for all thoughtful well-wishers to Ireland. It shows that of late years they have begun to aim at a higher standard of comfort in their household surroundings, that they are not satisfied to share the mud hovels with the pigs, as their fathers were.

If this germ of good—for good it is assuredly—is rightly developed, it will be an inestimable benefit to both countries. So long as the higher classes in Ireland live beyond their means, in order to keep up appearances in London or Dublin; so long as they prefer a vulgar rivalry in dress and equipage with their neighbours in England, or amongst themselves, to a quiet discharge of their duties at home; so long as they argue—as one may often hear them argue—

that the farmer and the labourer and the servant are very well off in the mud cabin, or with fare and wages which are literally starvation wages and fare, because the peasants' fathers and grandfathers thought themselves well off in no better circumstances, there can be little or no hope of prosperity for Ireland.

Mr. Lecky mentions, as curious proof of the cheapness of living in Ireland during the last century, that towards the middle of it a Limerick gentleman, with a wife and family, was able to maintain them and a household of three or four servants, and to keep a carriage, on an income of four hundred a year. But it is a common thing at the present day, in the south and west of Ireland, to find a gentleman

maintaining the same establishment on the same income, or at all events on five hundred a year. This is done by cutting down the wages of servants, and the expenses of lodging and boarding them, in a manner unknown in England. An Irish gentleman, the owner of a carriage and a hunter or two, whose family dress finely and make a capital appearance in "society," will cram four servants into a small bedroom, sometimes a flagged one underground, containing two beds, without a fireplace or proper washing apparatus, linen, etc.; and the answer to any remonstrance on this disregard of justice—one might say of health and life—is that such accommodation is "better than that the servants were accustomed to at home."

## OUT AMONG THE TURKOMANS.

BY THE REV. JAMES BASSETT, OF TEHERAN, PERSIA.

II.

UNDER the direction of our guide we find it no difficult matter to traverse the few miles that lie between us and the border. There are many paths known to him where we shall be unmolested. In fact, the border is open to all who may find an object in crossing. Once there, our go-between introduces us to a few Goklen and Tekke, who, for a consideration, undertake to see us safely through the land; but here is a desert place, where we cannot remain if we would, so we hasten on. The country through which we pass is easily described. It is a desert for the most part, with here and there an oasis. We ride, one, two, and three days, following a dim track, sometimes without a path even to guide us, through sands, around kabeers, and over hills. At last, after much fatigue for men and horses, at night we reach what appears to be a fertile valley or plain. Then we come to a cluster of habitations which may be called a village, but which is more like a camp than like a town. There are no streets, no lamps. The only police are a few dogs, which threaten to tear us to pieces. The starlight, so bright in the atmosphere of that land, enables us to see our way and something of the place. The houses are constructed of a kind of felt, called by the natives *katcha*, made, as we knew, by pounding masses of wool in water, or saturated with water, until it forms a compact mass of the desired thickness. After being thoroughly dried it becomes quite waterproof, and very good protection against the sunlight. Riding up to one of the tents, we dismount, and are conducted by one of our party within, truly thankful, by means of darkness and expedition, to escape observation. A glance reveals the situation. A foreigner will be here more of a curiosity than a menagerie of wild animals would be. The children will follow us all day, and the whole town will gather about our tent. We now divest ourselves of every remaining fragment of European and Christian clothing, which we have not, before this, laid aside, and we long for the holy insignificance of a dervish. Our host is the *khan*, or great one of the place. He has hereditary and acquired power with the people, and this is our protection. They know of no other authority than that which is patriarchal or parental. His tent is the best in the town, and separated from others occupied by women and children. Were he a poor man, seclusion would be expensive and impractic-

able, and the men and women would all have to occupy one lodging-house. I observe there are many sheep and goats in the village, for their bleating and their bells are heard frequently. Occasionally a goat darts under the raised side of the pavilion to be banished to the harem, and to the abodes of the men who have but one tent.

The floor of our room is made of a *katcha* like the one we have for a roof, only it is of much better quality than the other. Upon the *katcha* are placed for each guest a beautiful Turkoman rug called a *kauley*. The pattern is dark crimson ground, with small white cubes. On one of these is placed a tick filled with cotton, a new calico quilt, and a round pillow of the same material; but these I decline, preferring the small stock of bedding which I had brought lashed to the back of my saddle, for this was to be said in its favour that I felt no misgivings as to its contents.

One of my travelling companions remained in the room with me as a servant. From him, as from previous and subsequent observation, I learned that the beds of the common people, where they cared for such luxuries, were stuffed with wool; but often their beds were no more than a piece of *katcha*, and frequently were the bare ground, the ordinary wearing apparel furnishing the needed covering.

At earliest dawn I was awakened by the noise made by the shepherds driving off the flocks. Rising at this hour, and partially opening a fold in the tent, I noticed the people were performing the morning ablutions in a small stream of water which flowed through the town; I knew that to them there was an important religious ceremony in this exercise, and so I may for this reason have watched them more closely, especially as one of the distinguishing tenets of the two great Mohammedan sects lies in the mode of applying the water in washing; one sect contending that the water should be put on with an upward stroke of the hand, from the fingers up the arm; the other claiming that it should be placed by one hand on the upper part of the arm or face, and rubbed downward. A laver and pitcher of brass having been brought, I was invited by my man to wash, which I did, holding my hands over the bowl while he poured water upon them.

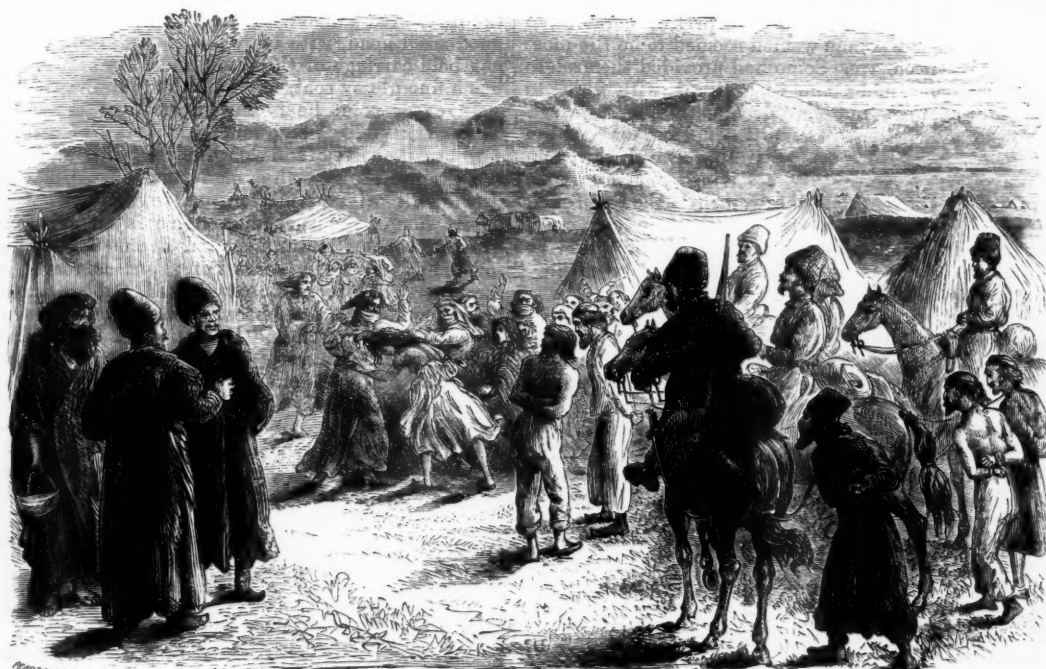
I could now see how the people were dressed. The description of the clothing of the children and of some



of the people would be very brief if it were to be made as short as the dress was scant. There seemed to be but very little difference in the dress of men and women. They each wore a long gown, made of coarse cotton and woollen goods made by themselves, and generally were of a bright red colour. But the men were easily distinguished by their large hats of lambskin and their long beards.

While I was taking these notes, the khan came in, saluting me with the customary salutation, Praise God you are well—"Tongregah shuker, cafeis yokchedir." I prepared to anticipate him in questions. From the conversation I learned that he was at this time about sixty years of age, as nearly as could be

ment from the men of another clan. If wrong is done I demand reparation; if it is not made we retaliate." This has been the rule with Persians, and Turkomans also, in years past. There has been very little done in the way of what may be termed organised or regular warfare. Aggression on the part of some lawless band has been made the pretext for indiscriminate slaughter. The well-disposed have suffered with the guilty. As is generally the case with a people destitute of a well organised and responsible government, the violence of a few desperate men involves a large number of innocent persons. Later in my journey I had occasion to observe the truth of these statements. Near the Persian border



TURKOMAN RECEPTION OF CAPTIVES.

ascertained by tradition and reference to remarkable events in his life. It was evident that he knew all the ways of Turkoman people. He had led his men against Russians and Persians. He had killed men in fight, and had brought off his captives.

Tea was now served, and shortly afterwards breakfast, consisting of eggs, a kabob, and bread, designed for myself only, as a Mussulman could not, consistently with his religion, eat with a Christian—a restriction to which Christians willingly consent.

I was much interested in the government and administration of justice among this people. They know nothing of a code of laws, written and accepted as a rule; but they have a common law—the law of nature, enforced by conscience and by religion. Legislation with them is a short process. If any measures are necessary for the public good, an assembly is called of the heads of the families, and decided by the most resolute and strong. The penalty of injury is retaliation, a motive strong enough to restrain only the weak. Said the khan, "These matters are commonly left to the old men, but each khan must protect his own against ill-treat-

ment from the men of another clan. If wrong is done I demand reparation; if it is not made we retaliate." This has been the rule with Persians, and Turkomans also, in years past. There has been very little done in the way of what may be termed organised or regular warfare. Aggression on the part of some lawless band has been made the pretext for indiscriminate slaughter. The well-disposed have suffered with the guilty. As is generally the case with a people destitute of a well organised and responsible government, the violence of a few desperate men involves a large number of innocent persons. Later in my journey I had occasion to observe the truth of these statements. Near the Persian border

in Persia, I saw numerous flocks of sheep grazing. They were to be seen during three days' journey. On inquiry I learned that some weeks previous a band of Turkomans, crossing the line, had driven off about three hundred sheep and goats. A Persian force was immediately collected, and making a raid upon the tribe in a time of professed peace, drove off all the flocks they could find, amounting, as it was said, to many thousand sheep and goats.

While the khan was talking a man came in reporting that a number of raiders, with captives taken from Persia, were now near the village, and so we all went out to see them. I had heard of the part performed by Turkoman women in the reception of prisoners. At another time and in another place a Georgian, who had himself experience with Turkomans, told me about this ceremony, and the part played by the women in it. They generally let the captive men off with comparatively few blows, but not so the captive Persian women. To the latter they show little mercy, and in most cases would kill them were they not restrained by the fear of their own husbands and brothers.

He told me in particular of a young Georgian and his sister who were seized while walking from Saydabad to Abassabad. The young man was after a time ransomed. He said that he and his sister feared and dreaded the first entrance to the Turkoman village more than anything else. When they arrived at their destination the young man had an easy time of it, but the blows spared him fell upon the young woman, who was so much frightened and so badly beaten that she never recovered, and died from the effects of it.

Unmerciful as the Turkoman woman seems to be, her act is but the unconscious protest of her nature against a polygamy and a concubinage which has gone far toward changing the blood, if not the language of the race. I was not surprised, therefore, to see that the Turkoman women seemed to be the most interested spectators. Some had provided themselves with switches, and some with straps, with which to do the beating, but the greater number awaited, empty handed, the opportunities and impulses of the moment. As the company approached, the men came on very composedly, receiving congratulations from their friends; but the women rushed pell-mell upon the prisoners, having it all their own way, lashing with their tongues in vile epithets quite as rapidly as with their sticks and straps, or as they could slap with their hands.

In most cases the prisoners, especially the men, are stripped of their clothing if it be worth possessing, which is appropriated by their captors as booty, as soon as it can be done with safety to themselves. A few old rags, a bag, or a piece of katcha are given instead of the clothing to meet the demands of so much civilisation as the desert and the caprice of the robber band may allow.

Wherever we go among this people we shall find them governed by pretty much the same rules. In one place they will be found living in brown tents; in another, where reeds are abundant, their dwellings will be alootchi-huts of reeds; and in cities they may be seen occupying huts, tents, and houses of sun-dried brick and mud. All their ceremonies have in a marked degree an element of religion and superstition in them.

I made inquiry after, but could find nothing of a queer marriage rite said to be practised by them, in which a maiden mounted on a fleet horse, and pursued by a number of young mounted horsemen, becomes the wife of the one who first overtakes her.

Among all Oriental people the maiden is, or should be, married a long time before she is well able to sit upon a horse. That important event is carefully negotiated by interested parties, and is not left to chance. Moreover, the women are in general bad riders. In eight years' stay among Persians and Tartars, whose chief conveyance is the back of a horse or some other animal, I have seen not more than half a dozen women riding faster than a walk. In most cases the horses which they ride are led by men or boys. Such is their timidity, that they are for the most part consigned to donkeys. If, therefore, any such rite were observed, I should consider it as exceptional as the existence among them of an old maid.

The Turkomans are noted horsemen. Their existence depends in great part upon their being such. But it must not be supposed that every man, or a majority of the men, are possessed of horses. None but the well-to-do and the rich among them can

afford the luxury of horses. The poor must travel on foot, or, at the best, ride an ox or donkey. The Turkoman horse is unique; he possesses such marks as distinguish him from all other horses. There is with them a variety of breeds in the horses brought from Russia, Bokhara, and Persia in their predatory expeditions, but the representative horse of the Turkomans is famous for these points, namely, height of limb, length and roundness of barrel, length and fineness of neck, the mane of which is very light, and usually shaven off. The neck tends to what horsemen call a sheep-neck, but just avoids that by being rather broad at the shoulder. Now nearly all these features are against him, but there is a filling up of these outlines and a finish which show the high-bred animal. A small, fine ear, set upon a good-sized head, with bony muzzle, a good, though not bold carriage of the head, and a mild eye. He has a fine glossy coat, and long, bony limbs.

In every point he is the antipode of the Osbeg Tartar horse, his neighbour, which is short, thick-set, broad-chested, and long-haired, with an exceptionally profuse growth of mane and tail. Under the care of his original master, and in the tents of his desert home, the Turkoman horse is an animal of great powers of endurance and fleetness, continued for many days in succession; but as reared by foreigners, he becomes heavy-footed, flabby, clumsy, and unequal to inferior breeds in endurance of severe and protracted exertion. By natives of Central Asia and Persia this breed of horses is very highly esteemed, and commands a higher price than any other, the pure Arab alone excepted. The horses of Bactria were noted in ancient times. We may reasonably suppose the Turkoman, or a horse reared in the same country as that in which he is bred, to have been the famous breed, and it would require no great stretch of imagination in the experts of numismatics to discover him in the animal which figures on some of the ancient coins.

Dismissing now the further description in detail of the customs of this people, I shall state some of the more important facts relating to them.

The Turkomans occupy the territory whence the Turkish races, at different periods of time, have come. The Turks of Asia Minor, Europe, Persia, Russia, and Central Asia are, by the essential unity of their speech, as well as by history, referred to one origin not very remote. Persian historians give this origin, and the genealogy of all the tribes. It is curious to note in their history the rapidity with which tribes arise and again disappear. The establishment of a dynasty by some successful member of a clan gives pre-eminence to his tribe for a time, but inevitably disperses it. It is not a hundred years since a noted tribe gave a reigning dynasty to an Asiatic kingdom, but the tribe has lost its identity with the loss of its former geographical boundaries. Some persons find in the name Turkoman the ancient Togarmah. Wolff writes:—"The Turkomans are called the children of Togarmah. Is it not remarkable that this description agrees with the words of Ezekiel (Ezek. xxvii. 14), 'They of the house of Togarmah traded in thy fairs with horses and horsemen'—i.e., slaves, because the Persian slaves are used as horsemen, and mules. This is their trade to this day." While quoting this passage, I assume no responsibility for the exegesis. It discloses, however, one fact very clearly—viz., that Wolff recognised the Turkoman horse as the one seen by Ezekiel. The

prevalent and most esteemed colour in the Turkoman and the Osbeg horse is, with natives of those countries, a noted fact, and one which may help some persons to discover some of the horses of prophecy in the ranks of Tchengis Khan and Tamerlan.\* So far as history treats of this people, it sheds only an uncertain light upon them.

The name Turkoman seems to be given especially to the races inhabiting the regions above described; though there is much indefiniteness in the common use of the names Turkoman, Turk, and Tartar, as applied to the races inhabiting other countries. The Turkoman seems to lose that name when he permanently settles beyond the borders of his native desert. His identity and name are lost in the terms Turk and Tartar. The origin of his name seems to be determined only by conjecture. One writer finds it in Togarmah; another says it is from Turk and man—meaning, "I am a Turk." But it should be said that the term *turk* is used as an adjective by Tartars, and it may be conjectured that the adjective gave rise to the proper name.

As the Tekke tribe is the strongest and most noted, their language becomes the most prominent, and may be considered the most important of any of the dialects spoken within the boundaries described. It is a dialect of what is commonly called the Turkish or Tartar language, and so is allied to the Osmanli, the Azarbijan, Trans-Caucasian, Kazan, Osbeg, and other dialects.

Among the principal peculiarities of this speech may be mentioned the following, viz. :—(1) The predominance of the short sound of *a*, or the patta, rather than the long sound of *alif*. In this peculiarity it differs from the speech of its nearest neighbours the Osbegs on the east, and the Persian Tartars on the west. The termination of the infinitive mood is written in the Osbeg-Tartar with an *alif* and pronounced with the long sound. In books of the Tekke it is written often without an *alif*; but if that letter should be written it is pronounced short. (2) The tendency to the long sound of *e*. (3) Use of consonants where vowels are used in other dialects as, *bolde* for *olde*, *birde* for *virde*, *bar* for *war*. The *w* here may be considered a consonant, but is used to represent *wāw* of the Arabic. (4) Transposition of certain consonants as *pā* for *fā*. (5) Personal and relative pronouns. In these it differs from Persian Tartar, and agrees in part with the Osbeg. But the difference relates only to the third person singular and plural. (6) Divergence from other dialects in some inflections of the verb. (7) Marked absence of Arabic and Persian words as compared with the Osmanli, Trans-Caucasian and Osbeg-Tartar. (8) A unique use of certain particles. (9) A vocabulary of many words not found in any other dialect.

It is probable that the Tekke speech is well known by all the tribes in Western Turkestan. The superiority in numbers and influence of that tribe would seem to justify such a conclusion, and warrant the choice of them as the representative of all.

The name, variously spelled, Jagattai is sometimes, by Turkomans and others, used loosely of their language and books, often to distinguish them from those of other races, and to denote the origin of their literature and affinities of their speech. Most of the old books which they may possess are called Jagattai, often, it may be presumed,

without any other ground than the acknowledged sway of the Jagattai, and prevalence of a so-called literature in the regions which they inhabit.

It is to be said that the geographical boundaries within which the house of Jagattai became specially dominant, and the perpetuity with the Turkomans of the Tartar language and rule, would favour the conjecture that the impression once made by such literature and speech would remain less corrupted than the same language in Bokhara, in which the Persian largely prevails, and which, as nearly all other countries of Central Asia, has frequently been brought under foreign rule, and possessed by other races.

The Tekke have but few books. These are written in the Arabic character, and are manuscript. A very few are written by Tekke authors. But the greater part of the few books they possess are produced in Bokhara in the Osbeg dialect. Their books all exhibit, in a marked extent, one characteristic of quite all the writings of native Tartar and Turkish authors, that is, the lack of a standard in orthography. Madee Khan, a Persian writer of distinction, says that the Tartar language is governed by no rules in this particular. The books themselves certainly bring the same testimony. The termination of the infinitive mood is often in the same manuscript spelled in three ways. A word may be spelled quite as many ways as it occurs times on a page.

Translators accustomed to the uniformity in orthography which characterises books in European languages, find this peculiarity of native writers a great source of annoyance. If one resorts, from the supposed blunders of his *mirza*, to the books, he will find no relief. If he adopt a uniform orthography it must be largely phonetic. But in so far as that uniformity prevails in a writing, it bears witness to the foreign origin of the book in the judgment of a Tartar. But if a respectable English author may write the plural of the name of these nomads Turkomans, and on another page of the same book, write it Turkomen; and another man write traveller with one or two l's at his option; and others may oscillate between Walker and Webster, at pleasure, we may well hesitate before taking the Turk's land on the pretext of bad orthography.

By religious faith the Tekkes are allied to the people of Bokhara, Afghanistan, and Turkey, and are, by virtue of the same faith, adversaries of the Persians. Difference in certain tenets and traditions has been made the pretext or apology for much of the hostility felt by the Turkoman toward the people of Persia. The latter have in all time asserted their right to more or less of the territory occupied by the nomads; while the former have acknowledged no subordination to any government. They are most of the time in the condition of the children of Israel, when it could be said of them that every man did that which was right in his own eyes. The doctrine of these sons of the desert is that the Persians are heretics, whom they treat much as they would infidels. They kill Christians and Persians from principle, except as they may be incited by the hope of a ransom.

The religious orders among them are those of Islam. They possess one or two schools of some note among themselves, where young Mussulmans learn to read the Koran, and works in philosophy and theology. The mollahs are numerous, but are unlearned even in their own religion, and more given to military exercises than to the duties of piety. It

\* Timour Lank.



may with truth be said that superstition, the fear of evil spirits, and demoniac influence has more power over the Turkoman than his religious faith. The belief in the presence of demons, and demoniacal possessions, gives occasion for exorcists, among whom the itinerant Jew figures most conspicuously and successfully, and often sincerely believing in the power of his remedy—the recital of a passage from the Old Testament or from the Gamorah—the benefits of which he is permitted to transfer to a Turkoman for a consideration; and in consideration of whose powers the nomad tolerates and pets him. These exorcists are usually physicians, and have great influence with the people. It is a native doctor only who can testify with just emphasis to the immorality prevailing among these polygamists of the desert, who are living pest-houses, and whose flesh is dropping from the bones, through persistent, voluntary, and also inherited licentiousness.

From the earliest times it has been the practice and pastime of this people to make war upon Persians. The saying is current with them that no sacrifice is so acceptable before God as the head of a Kuzzilbosh (a nickname for Persians). The khans, or hereditary lords, whose government is purely patriarchal, are often compelled to obey the popular will, expressed in an assembly of the people. For the most part things follow the course of nature. The strong rule the weak. All measures affecting the common welfare are determined in an assembly of the people. But here, as in other places, it happens that the demagogues rule the democracy. A few violent fellows generally decide the bent of the congregation.

The khans and the people as a nation may be at peace with Persia. But nearly every village and every clan is independent, and there is common consent to the opinion that Persians are lawful objects of plunder. Whenever, therefore, the harvest is short, or commercial and predatory enterprises in other places fail, or the favourable season comes, a patriarch, or any other enterprising person in the town, may propose a chapoo, as a raid is called. Volunteers are numerous or few, as the times or the dangers of the undertaking may be. The horses are put in trim. To each saddle is fastened a small leathern bag of water, and a bag of cake for the horses; also a little bread for the rider. He is rarely supplied with a gun. His weapons are a sabre and a knife stuck in his girdle. Fifty or a hundred miles may be travelled very leisurely to the border; then horses are put upon the gallop, which they keep up during the attack and the retreat. The horses being often very weary and heated, and it being quite impossible to give them water, the rider dismounts, takes a lump of fat tied by a string to the bow of the saddle, which he thrusts into the mouth of the animal, but does not permit the horse to eat it. When partially down the animal's throat the man pulls it out with the string attached to it. By this process of swabbing, the thirst is allayed for a time. The old and infirm among the prisoners are dispatched by the sabre. The young and strong only are taken as prisoners. Arrived at the Turkoman village, on the return, the captives are sold, or employed as servants by their captors.

Turkomans may be seen in the bazaars, and often in the prisons of Teheran. The Shah sometimes finds it to be the surest way of securing peace to keep

the chiefs, or the sons of troublesome chiefs, as hostages.

The practice of both Turkomans and Persians of sending into perpetual slavery all prisoners of war was fortunately terminated by Russia in the capture of Khiva and the peace made at the conclusion of the war with the Turkomans. At that time many thousand Persians returned from bondage, often to find no trace of the home or friends they left many years ago.

There was a mutual release of these prisoners. Previous to that time there was a caravansari near the gate No, in Teheran, occupied by Turkoman prisoners, many of whom had remained there many years. Said an old Turkoman to me one day as I talked with him in the caravansera, "They (the Persians) treat their prisoners worse than we do our captives, for we send them to the fields to work, but the Persians keep us shut up in these horrid places." But now the caravansera has been torn down, and the inmates have returned to their homes beyond the Gorghen and in the desert. The Turkoman says, "We now kill all we capture. Russia permits us to sell no more slaves." With the capture of Khiva, and virtual conquest of Bokhara, the chief slave-markets were taken and the trade effectually suppressed. So the Turkoman finds much of his occupation gone.

The extension of Russian power is viewed by many with suspicion on political grounds, but it must be acknowledged, when regarded from the lawless and chaotic state of Central Asia, to have a most beneficial influence in suppressing slavery and in establishing order and government among the lawless tribes.

Following close on this release of captives was the effort at alliance. It is said that adversity makes friends of those whom prosperity separates. This might be said of the Turkomans. Defeated, and with a fair prospect of being attacked from all sides, it seemed highly desirable to them to make peace with Persia. At that time Persia might, it seems, have terminated a perpetual border war by alliance with Russia, and might possibly have acquired some territory, but fears of Russia, with, it may be presumed, a little English diplomacy thrown in, outweighed the fear of the Turkoman, and Persia, it is said, notified Russia of a claim of territory to the Attrek. In prosecution of the negotiations for peace and alliance, a delegation of Turkomans waited upon the Shah. But it was evident that the conclusion was not altogether satisfactory to the Tekke. I was enabled to meet some of the members of that delegation. They appeared dressed in long red gowns, the gift of the Shah, with which they seemed not very well pleased. The patriarch of the company was an old man who talked freely of his people. Pointing his finger towards his red gown, he said, "This is all we have received from the Shah. He ordered that money should be paid us, but his officers have put off payment week by week until it will be midwinter before we can reach our homes." It was evident the old man had been trained to war; all his thoughts seemed to run upon blood and booty. I put the question plainly to him, "Do you know who Jesus Christ was?" Hesitating a moment, he said, "No; but I think you mean that Russian general who, many years ago, came over the border, and killed so many of our men;" and then, seeming to think that he was not quite right, he inquired, "Was he an Englishman?"



## THE TROUBLES OF A CHINAMAN.

BY JULES VERNE.

CHAPTER V.—UNWELCOME TIDINGS.

"IS there no letter for me yet, old mother?"

"No, madam, not yet."

The same question had been asked and the same answer had been given at least ten times that day in the boudoir of a house in the Cha-Cooa Avenue, Peking, where the beautiful La-oo was sitting with her crabby attendant, old Nan, who, according to Chinese custom with ancient domestics, was ordinarily addressed as "old mother."

La-oo had been married at eighteen to a man twice her own age, a literate of the first grade, engaged on the compilation of the famous Se-Ko-Tswan-Choo.\* He died three years after his marriage, leaving his fascinating wife a widow alone in the world.

Not long afterwards Kin-Fo happened to be paying a visit to Peking. Wang, who knew the young widow well, introduced her to his pupil, and suggested the idea that he should make her his wife. With the utmost complacency Kin-Fo acquiesced; it was soon found that the lady was by no means indisposed to entertain the proposal, and accordingly, to the philosopher's great satisfaction, it was arranged that the wedding should take place as soon as Kin-Fo, after his return from Peking, should be able to make the necessary preparations at Shang-Hai.

It is quite an unusual occurrence in the Celestial Empire for widows to marry again, not because they

themselves have no desire, but because the desire on their part would very rarely be reciprocated. Kin-Fo, however, was quite a law to himself, and did not hesitate to make an exception to the general rule. La-oo was intelligent and well-educated; she

thoroughly understood the part she would have to play with the singularly apathetic being who was to become her husband, and it must be owned that she was attracted towards him by the wish to prove that happiness might form an element of his existence.

By remarrying she forfeited the privilege of passing under the "pai-loos"—memorial arches—which the Emperors from time to time had erected to the honour of women renowned for fidelity to their deceased husbands. One of these had been raised to the fame of Soong, who had never quitted her husband's tomb; another to Koong-Kiang, who had cut off her arm as a token of her grief; and yet another to Yeu-Tehiang, who had disfigured herself still more severely.

La-oo, however, thought that she could well dispense with this widow's privilege, and was quite prepared to lead the life of submission which the rule of her country demanded; was ready to renounce all conversation which did not concern the trivial affairs of domestic life, and professed herself content to conform to the code of the Li-num, which treats of the duties of home, and to be obedient to the precepts of Nei-tse-pian, which enforces the obligations of the marriage vow. Meanwhile she was quite



"LOOK AGAIN, OLD MOTHER," SAID LA-OO.

\* This encyclopedic work, commenced in 1773, is to comprise 100,000 articles, of which only 73,738 have as yet appeared.

aware that she should enjoy the consideration always granted to a wife, who, amongst the upper classes, is by no means the slave which not unfrequently she is supposed to be.

La-oo's husband, at his decease, had left her not in affluent but yet in easy circumstances. Her establishment in the Cha-Cooa Avenue was very modest, old Nan being the only servant. The mistress was quite accustomed to the maid's contradictory habits, which are by no means limited to the domestics in Chinese households.

The favourite apartment of the young widow was her boudoir, the furniture of which had been of the simplest character until within the last two months, during which costly presents had been constantly arriving from Shang-Hai. Among the recent gifts were some pictures that adorned the walls, one of these being a *chef-d'œuvre* of the old painter, Wan-Tse-Neu,\* which could not fail at once to attract the eye of a connoisseur as it hung, a contrast every way to the water-colours of modern Chinese artists, glaring with their striking anomalies of green horses, violet dogs, and bright blue trees. On a lacquered table, outspread like the wings of giant butterflies, were several fans from the great school of art at Swatow; around a hanging vase of porcelain was grouped an elegant festoon of artificial flowers, so exquisitely manufactured from the pith of the Arabia papyrifera, that only by close inspection could they be distinguished from the real nenuphars, chrysanthemums, and lilies of Japan, that were tastefully arranged in carved wood-work stands in various parts of the room; at the windows were hung blinds of plaited bamboo, which by a process of sifting seemed to moderate the intensity of the solar heat. Arranged in the form of a huge peony, the Chinese symbol of beauty, was a magnificent screen composed of hawk's feathers; two aviaries designed as miniature pagodas were tenanted by Indian birds of gorgeous plumage; some Æolian "tiemaols" vibrated pleasantly in the air; and these were only some out of many souvenirs that had been contributed by the absent lover.

La-oo herself was charming. Her beauty could not fail to commend itself to the most critical of European eyes. Her complexion was fair, escaping entirely the national characteristic of being yellow; her eyelids had scarcely the least inclination towards the temples; her hair, which was rather dark, was set off by a little bunch of peach-blossoms, fastened in by bodkins of green jade; her teeth were small and white; her eyebrows stippled in most delicately with Chinese ink. No mixture of honey and Spanish white had been allowed to enamel her cheek; no circle of carmine gave a false ruddiness to her lip; no line of pencilling joined eye to eye; nor was there on her countenance a tinge of the rouge upon which the court annually expends ten million sapecks. La-oo would have nothing to do with cosmetics. Rarely as she left the retirement of her house, she knew well enough that it mattered not to her, and

that she was at liberty to dispense with the ordinary distinctions which Chinese ladies feel bound to exhibit when they appear in public.

As simple as elegant was her dress. Over a pleated skirt she wore a long robe, embroidered on the border, and fastened at the waist by a stomacher embossed with gold filigree; a pair of short trousers met her stockings of nankeen silk, and she wore slippers studded with pearls.

Her hands were delicately-formed, her long rosy nails being each protected by a little guard of chased silver.

That her feet were small was to be attributed only to nature; it was not because they had been subjected to the barbarous deformation which has been recognised as a national usage in China for the last seven centuries, a practice which probably originated with some lame princess, although it has been laid to the caution of some jealous husbands. The operation is very simple; it consists merely in bandaging the toes tight down under the sole, leaving the heel perfectly untouched; but the effect is in the last degree injurious, as it utterly destroys the power of walking. It is a practice, however, that is rapidly dying out, so that nowadays scarcely three Chinese women in ten are to be met with who have in infancy been made the victims of the trying ordeal.

"Go and look again, old mother," again said La-oo.

"What's the use of looking?" answered Nan.

"Never mind; go and look; I am sure there will be a letter for me to-day."

Old Nan grumbled, and left the room.

La-oo took up a piece of needlework to amuse herself; she was embroidering a pair of slippers for Kin-Fo. Embroidery is done by women of all classes.

The work soon dropped from her fingers. She rose and went to a bonbon box, and taking out a few melon-seeds, crunched them between her little teeth. She took up a book. It was the Mishum, the code of directions which every married woman is bound to study. She glanced listlessly over its instructions:—

"The dawn, like the spring, is the proper time to work."

"Rise betimes; indulge not in slumber."

"Be careful alike of the mulberry and the hemp."

"Spare not to spin thy cotton and thy silk."

"A woman's virtues are her industry and economy."

But La-oo was not in a mood for reading; the precepts caught her eye, but moved not her mind. She flung the book aside.

"Where is he now?" she said to herself. "He must have returned from Canton; when will he come here? Koanine! Koanine! watch over his voyage!"

Her glance rested for a moment, almost mechanically, upon a patchwork tablecloth; it was made of pieces as minute as mosaic, and on it was pictured a mandarin duck and its brood; it was an emblem of fidelity. Next she went to a flower-stand and picked off a blossom at random.

"Ah!" she exclaimed; "my fortune fails me! I ought to have plucked a willow-bloom, the token of spring; and see, here is a yellow chrysanthemum, the emblem of autumn and decay."

Not wanting to dwell upon the evil omen, she took up her lute and played a few chords of "The Clapsed Hands," but the song refused to come to her lips, and

\* The renown of the great masters is handed down to us in traditions that are not unworthy of credit. An anecdote is told of a painter of the third century, named Tao-Poo-Ying, who, having finished a screen for the Emperor, amused himself by putting in here and there a few flies, which he had the satisfaction of seeing the Emperor try to flap away with his handkerchief. No less celebrated was Wan-Tse-Neu, who lived somewhere about the beginning of the eleventh century. It is said that having been commissioned to execute some mural decorations within the palace, he painted several pheasants, and that when some foreign envoys, who brought some falcons as a present to the Emperor, were introduced into the room, the birds of prey mistook the painted pheasants for live ones, and made a dash at the wall, more to the injury of their heads than to the satisfaction of their voracity.—*Thompson's Travels in China.*



she laid down the instrument without further effort to proceed.

"It is not often," she murmured to herself, "that his letters are so long coming. And his letters, too, how sweet they are! not merely the words he writes, but the words he speaks; you may hear them for yourself." And her gaze involuntarily rested upon the phonograph with which he had supplied her. It was a carved box on a lacquered stand, corresponding exactly with what Kin-Fo had himself used at Shang-Hai. By means of it they had listened to the voices of each other. For some days, however, the apparatus had been silent and unused.

Re-entering the room abruptly came old Nan. "Here's your letter!" she said, and left the boudoir as abruptly as she had entered it.

The envelope bore the Shang-Hai postmark; but without waiting to examine the outside, the eager La-oo, radiant with smiles, tore it open, and extracted, not an ordinary letter, but a sheet of tinfoil marked with some indented dots that revealed nothing until they were submitted to the action of the phonograph, when she knew they would produce the inflexions of his very voice.

"A letter!" she cried; "and more than a letter—I shall hear him speak!"

Carefully she laid her treasure upon the surface of a cylinder within; she put the mechanism in motion, and distinctly recognised the tones of her lover's voice:—

"La-oo, dearest little sister!

"Ruin has carried off the last sapeck of my property. My riches have gone like leaves in an autumn blast. I cannot make you the partner of my penury. Forget, forget for ever,

"Your unfortunate and despairing

"KIN-FO."

What a death-blow was this to all her expectations! Bitterness, she cried in her soul; bitterness more acrid than gentian had filled her cup! Had Kin-Fo forsaken her? What! did he think that she looked for her happiness in riches?

She was like a boy's kite with a broken string; slowly, slowly she sank downwards to the earth.

Nan was promptly summoned.

But Nan did not hurry herself. When she came, she shrugged her shoulders and lifted her mistress up on to her "Lang." The Lang was a bed warmed by artificial heat; but to the stricken La-oo the couch was cold as stone, and sleepless were the five long watches of that weary night.

## LEAP YEAR.

THE present year being Leap year, or, as it is sometimes more popularly called, the "Ladies' Year," February has twenty-nine days, for, according to the well-known distich—

"Leap year coming once in four,  
Gives February one day more."

This extra day, however, has not unfrequently been the source of much confusion, for those who happen to be born upon it have no real birthday except once in every four years. If, too, any reliance is to be placed upon superstitious fancy, it is extremely unlucky to be born on "Leap day"—man's entry

into the world on this critical day being supposed to predict his speedy exit. This notion, too, we find prevalent in some parts of the Continent. Thus in Italy the peasants believe that when a child is born in Leap year either it or its mother will die before the year is over. In Belgium we are informed there is a very popular superstition that in Leap year the young of no domestic animal will thrive, and that on this account, therefore, the farmer must make up his mind to expect a bad year. Experience, nevertheless, only too often proves the contrary, and at the close of the year the farmer is able to laugh at his prophet of ill-omen. A similar belief exists in Tuscany, where the poor people affirm that, "When Leap year comes it is good neither for the mother nor child." We find the same superstition existing in Russia, for, according to a proverb existing there in some parts, we are told that, "If St. Cassian (February 29th) looks on a cow it will wither." In Scotland, where there is a general prejudice against February, we understand there is a common saying respecting Leap year, which tells us that—

"Leap year

Was never a good sheep year."

In agricultural operations Leap year is not without its superstitions. It is a common notion, for instance, that during this year broad beans grow the wrong way—that is, the seeds are set in the pods in quite the contrary way to what they are in other years. The reason assigned for this curious circumstance is "because it is the ladies' year; they (the beans) always lay the wrong way in Leap year." Leap year, too, it would appear, is not altogether a good year for agricultural pursuits. In Belgium the farmers declare that graft and young shoots never, as at other times, arrive at their full growth, but either become stunted or blighted. In France most of our readers are doubtless aware of the popular saying—

"Année bissextile,

Année infertile."

In Sicily, however, just the opposite opinion prevails, and the husbandman is advised to "set and graft vines in Leap year." In some parts, too, of the Continent there is a belief that in Leap year the wind always changes on a Friday.

Leap year has from time immemorial been considered in most respects an unlucky period—a superstition which prevailed even as far back as the middle ages. The Romans, we know, too, looked upon the bissextile, or Leap day, as unfortunate, and reckoned it as an unlucky day. The French are still in the habit of saying, when any misfortune happens, that the bissextus has fallen upon the business—"Le bissextile est tombé sur une telle affaire." The following curious account of the bissextus, or intercalary day, is literally translated from a Saxon treatise, quoted by Hampson. Some assert that the bissextus comes through this, that Joshua prayed to God that the sun might stand still for one day's length, when he swept the heathen from the land, as God granted to him. It is true that the sun did stand still the length of a day over the city of Gebaan; but the day went forwards in the same manner as other days. And the bissextus is not through that, though the unlearned so think." The same authority tells us that the Roman philosophers gave this day to the month of February because it is the shortest month.

Of this day the wise Augustine says "that the Almighty made it from the beginning of the world for a great mystery, and if it be passed by untold the just course of the year would be perversely altered. And again, it will happen to both the sun and the moon, because there is one day and one night (not reckoned)."

Reverting to the wide-world custom, which is far more honoured in the breach than in the observance, whereby a special licence is given to ladies during Leap year to make love, we find a curious allusion to it in a work entitled, "Courtship, Love, and Matrimony," printed in the year 1606. It is as follows: "Albeit it is now become a part of the common lawe in regard to social relations of life, that as often as every bissextile year doth return, the ladies have the sole privilege during the time it continueth, of making love unto the men, which they doe either by words or lookes, as to them it seemeth proper. And moreover no man will be entitled to the benefit of clergy, who doth refuse to accept the offers of a ladye, or who dothe in any wise treat her proposal with slight or contumely." Again, it may not be generally known that in days gone by, should a young lady propose to any gentleman and meet with a negative answer from him, the former, on exhibiting a scarlet petticoat, could demand from the latter a present equivalent in value to the dress she had on, however expensive the material might be.

Before concluding our remarks on this interesting day we would add that few perhaps are aware what a difference it makes in a pecuniary point of view to railway and other companies. Thus it was estimated that the intercalary days a few years ago would add to the London and North-Western profits about fifteen thousand pounds, a clear gain of eight thousand for the original shareholders, whilst the North-Eastern earnings would be increased about eight thousand, the shareholders being thus benefited to the extent of five thousand pounds. The same principle, too, applies to most of those many sources from whence public revenue is obtained.

T. F. THISELTON DYER.

## Varieties.

**WINTER IN FRANCE.**—The long and severe winter in Paris has recalled previous abnormal seasons. The "Gazette de France" gives a brief enumeration of the coldest winters known in France since the 15th century. At the close of "the great winter" of 1408 all the bridges over the Seine at Paris were torn down by the floods, carrying with them immense blocks of ice. In 1420 there were numbers of people frozen to death, and the wolves are said to have appeared in the streets of Paris and there to have eaten up some of the corpses. In 1507 the harbour of Marseilles was frozen up. In 1544 the frozen wine had to be broken up with axes and sold by weight. In 1607 cattle were frozen to death in their stalls, Paris suffered from a dearth of wood—its ordinary fuel, and people used to drive in carriages and sledges across the Seine. In 1665 the temperature sank to 22½ deg. of cold in Paris. In 1700 the cold fell to 23 deg. below zero; the Mediterranean was frozen in several places on the French coast, and the same was the case in some harbours on the Channel. Most of the trees in France were during this winter destroyed by the cold; wine was frozen into solid masses in the cellars, and a famine prevailed. In 1783 Paris experienced 16 deg. of cold. The frost lasted 63 consecutive days, and the Seine was frozen up for two full months. In 1788 the ice on the great canal at Versailles was 12in. thick. In 1795 the cold attained 23 deg. below zero in Paris; the frost continued 42 days; and the Dutch fleet, which was frozen up in

harbour, was captured by the French cavalry—the original, we presume, of the celebrated corps of the Horse Marines. In 1830 the thermometer registered 17 degrees of cold in Paris; all the rivers of France were frozen over, and many men and animals lost their lives by the frost. In 1853 almost all the rivers of Europe were frozen. In 1871 Paris experienced 22 deg. of cold, but the frost did not last long, and the ice on the Seine broke up on the second day after covering the river.

**CHRYSANTHEMUMS.**—An enthusiastic admirer of this flower says: "No lilies show so pure a white, no daffodils so clear a yellow. Roses have no prettier pinks, and all the family of the hollyhocks and dahlias, and many of the others—for instance, calceolarias and zinnias—cannot show tints and half-tones in crimson and orange and tawny more decided and bright and various than does the chrysanthemum alone. This flower, indeed, imitates several others in shape as well as hue; and whether as a rose, a dahlia, an aster, or even a carnation or daisy, makes an imitation sufficiently exact to create gratitude for its variety and to abolish monotony. Art here assists nature wonderfully. During the other seasons the flowers do not absolutely need man's help, but in winter the chrysanthemum seems glad of it, lending itself to skilled cultivation with singular readiness, and always rewarding ingenuity and patience with beautiful novelties of form or colour." Those who saw the chrysanthemum display in the Temple Gardens last November will almost agree with this eulogy.

**A REMARKABLE PASSAGE.**—The steamer Orient arrived at Adelaide in December, the voyage from Plymouth, including all stoppages, having been made in 37 days and 22 hours, the distance from Plymouth to Adelaide by the Cape being about twelve thousand nautical miles. The Orient maintained an average speed for the whole voyage of over 14 knots—a performance said to be unequalled in the annals of steam navigation.

**BELGIAN NEWSPAPERS.**—The "Agence de Publicité," which is published in Antwerp, gives what professes to be a complete list of the Belgian periodicals. Of the 54 daily papers, 19 appear at Brussels alone; 358 are weekly or bi-weekly publications. Few of these papers appeared before the middle of this century; but the "Journal de Liège" dates from 1764, and the "Gazette" of Bruges from 1793. Of the periodicals published in Belgium, 143 appear in Flemish and 269 in French.

**BURNING WITH ICE.**—Dr. Henry Warren, in his "Recreations in Astronomy," tells a story of Dr. Kane, the Arctic explorer, who fell in with some Esquimaux whom he was anxious to conciliate. He said to the old wizard of the tribe, "I am a wizard; I can bring the sun down out of the heavens with a piece of ice." "So," he writes, "I took a hatchet, chipped a small piece of ice into the form of a double convex lens, smoothed it with my warm hands, held it up to the sun, and as the old man was blind, I kindly burned a blister on the back of his hand to show him I could do it."

**THOM'S IRISH DIRECTORY.**—Near the close of last year died Alexander Thom, Queen's Printer for Ireland, whose name is familiar in connection with his Annual Irish Directory. The "Times" correspondent, in an obituary notice, says of this valuable work, "It has supplied data upon which statesmen have formed some of their most important legislative measures, and all have borne willing testimony to its worth. Mr. Gladstone, during his visit to Dublin, referred to these statistics in terms of the highest praise, and the tribute which he paid to Mr. Thom's services was esteemed as the best reward he had received. He was the official printer for the Government Departments in Ireland for over fifty years. Mr. Thom was born in Aberdeen in the year 1800, and came to this country in 1813 with his father, who was a journalist, and edited a newspaper then published in Dublin, called the 'Correspondent.' During his long connection with Ireland he witnessed many remarkable events and great changes in the habits of the people and the times. He was wont to refer to his early experience and the contrast which he observed between the social circumstances of the country and those of Scotland, and of Ireland herself in her more advanced civilisation. As an instance he would tell how even sixty years ago it was necessary to send an escort of dragoons with her Majesty's mail from Dundalk to Dublin to protect it from attacks by Collyer, a daring bandit, whose exploits made him so popular that the people could not be tempted by any reward to give him up. He ultimately surrendered upon certain terms, which recognised his importance, for they provided that he should keep the road clear of other freebooters. Mr. Thom obtained his first contract in 1822; but his most important work was for the Commissioners of Education. All Parliamentary blue-books relating to Ireland were printed by him."